



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Fort Worth District**

# News Release

Release No. CESWF-PA-01-008 Contact: Ron Ruffennach

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## **Army Corps of Engineers announces plans for Sparta Valley Park at Belton Lake**

The U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, announced today new operating policies for Sparta Valley Park at Belton Lake. The new policies follow a 30-day comment period about the Corps' proposal to close the park at night.

Sparta Valley Park is a small, 6-acre park with two camping/picnic sites, a two-lane boat ramp, one vault toilet and paved access roads. The park was open 24 hours a day, but because of littering, dumping and vandalism during late-night hours, the Corps proposed making the park a day-use only park with night closure.

The Corps received many written comments on the proposed change in the park's operating hours, according to Greg Pope, Belton Lake manager. The comments were evenly distributed between those supporting a night closure and day-use only park, and those who supported leaving the park open 24 hours a day to provide unlimited boat access to the lake.

In an effort to reach a compromise that will satisfy as many park users as possible and still reduce the late-night problems, the Corps will establish new operating policies for Sparta Valley Park:

- Two existing campsites and excess parking will be removed. No overnight camping will be allowed.
- Nighttime activities will be restricted to those associated with boat access to the lake.
- Additional park ranger patrols will be conducted through the area to enforce the rules.
- Additional law enforcement patrols under the contract with the Bell County Sheriff's Office will be provided. These patrols will cover late night/early morning hours.
- Adjacent homeowners and those visitors who expressed an interest in the park will be asked to help in identifying problems and reporting those problems to proper law enforcement officials.

"We hope these changes will reduce the problems that have been occurring in Sparta Valley Park," Pope said. "However, if the problems persist after implementing the new policies, the Corps will look at night closure for the park."